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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

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Department of Interior responds to FOIA Request

CHEYENNE, Wyo. – The U.S. Department of Interior has responded to a Freedom of Information Act request from former Wyoming Governor Dave Freudenthal. The response includes 76 documents and over 700 pages, much of it redacted.

Governor Matt Mead alerted the Department of the Interior that Wyoming still wanted the requested information even though there was a change in administrations. The request was for communications to and from the Deputy Assistant for Land and Minerals Management, Ned Farquhar, regarding coal, oil and gas leasing or other information about that process. The hope was to gain information about how the Deputy Assistant made decisions and if those decisions were unduly influenced by special interests.

Governor Mead's Policy Director Shawn Reese and staff are working through the documents, which were heavily redacted and contain no index. Reese said the information is available to the public. "We are not sure that the information the Department of Interior provided will show the public whether or not there was any undue influence from special interests," Reese said. "We're also looking into the reasons why so much of the information within the documents was omitted."

Wyoming has 30 days to appeal the justifications the Department of Interior provided for redacting information.

Please contact Jerimiah Rieman in the Governor's Office if you would like access to the documents provided by the Department of Interior. He can be reached at: jriema@wyo.gov

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